



# Elusive Eastern Oregon Wildlife

Courtesy Mark Penninger, Wildlife Biologist

**Moose** - you may be aware that Shiras moose have moved into northeast Oregon on their own. We can only speculate why they came. Some believe they came to escape wolves in Idaho. More than likely their arrival had more to do with excellent early seral habitat conditions created from logging on private timber lands in northeastern Washington. The moose population grew in response to the abundant food source, and as moose densities peaked some found it necessary to disperse. Until now most of the moose sightings have occurred on the Umatilla NF and surrounding private lands. But this summer there were sightings near Mt. Harris, and more recently in High Valley, Medical Springs, and at the I-84 and 31 road junction.

My limited exposure to Shiras moose in other parts of the west lead me to believe that our Forest has high potential to support this species in places like West Eagle Creek, Eagle Creek, and East Fork Eagle, Minam River and many of the Imnaha tributaries. ODFW continues to monitor 6 radio collared moose in the Wenaha/Lookingglass area.



Photographer: unknown



Photographer - M Penninger

**Mt Goats** - ODFW in cooperation with the Wallowa-Whitman and Warm Springs Indian Reservation were successful in the translocation of 45 mountain goats from the Elkhorn Mountains to the Warm Springs Reservation on Mt. Jefferson in the Cascades. We speculated that the goats would remain near the release site and become accustomed to their new home. After a few years of successful reproduction we would expect some pioneering of new areas. Well some of the goats decided to start their pioneering right away. Now the Deschutes and Willamette NFs have a few goats wandering in the vicinity of Three-Fingered Jack, west slope of Mt. Jefferson, and other areas.

At least two goats continue to hang around in atypical habitat near La Grande, one on Mt. Emily and another between Hilgard and Red Bridge. These individuals obviously didn't read the text books that describe their habitat preferences.